

REVIEW OF GELFAND, JENSON, AND DREW'S
UNDERSTANDING CHILD BEHAVIOR DISORDERS (3RD ED.)

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Childhood disorders can be devastating. Effective solutions can be elusive. As the field that wrestles with these issues, developmental psychopathology itself is only now maturing into young adulthood. In the third edition of this textbook, which is aimed at graduate and advanced undergraduate students, Gelfand, Jenson, and Drew provide necessary and useful updates from the 1988 edition to equip students with the most recent foundation of knowledge. Innovations and changing emphases in the field since the previous edition have been many, and the new volume carefully incorporates the most salient topics and supporting research findings. For example, in keeping with clinical practice, greater attention is given to childhood obsessive-compulsive disorder, anxiety disorders including posttraumatic stress disorder, and depression. Advances in etiological hypotheses relating to the biochemical bases of disorders and behavioral genetics are discussed, in addition to the more traditional theories. Improved treatment methods in the areas of psychosocial and psychopharmacological therapies are presented, as well as strides in prevention of mental retardation, school failure, and conduct disorder. Avoided, however, are treatment fads for which there is little, if any, research basis (e.g., eye movement exercises, harsh outdoor survival approaches, and procedures that employ group belittling or demeaning of targeted members). Facilitated communication

is included as an equivocal technique in need of additional research to clarify its effectiveness.

Single-subject design studies are utilized throughout this book to support theoretical and practical concepts when applicable. The authors take a strong stance that assessment and intervention practices should be supported by controlled empirical studies that, to the greatest extent possible, have been replicated. Assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of various approaches is informed by objective criteria. Within this context, they appreciate the reciprocal values and limitations of both single-subject and group designs. Approaches with less empirical support are presented, but are accompanied by caveats.

Behavior analysts should be aware that this volume is insubstantial in its coverage of contemporary behavioral assessment approaches such as structural analysis, functional assessment, functional analogue analysis, and ecobehavioral assessment. The chapter that addresses assessment practices relies on the use of psychometric tests, interviews, observations, and computer applications, but does not place any within the context of a functional assessment paradigm. The authors briefly note that "observation leads to a functional analysis" (p. 332), but do not fully define the term, nor do they speak to its significance. Surprisingly, *functional analysis* is not included in the assessment chapter's section of key terms. The omission of functional analysis as a topic in its own right is significant in view of the heavy emphasis, over the past decade, on the importance of adequate functional assessment as a means to develop effective non-

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restrictive treatment strategies. Indeed, the only indexed reference to *functional analysis* leads one to a chapter on classification systems in which the Kanfer and Saslow (1965) model of behavioral analysis is discussed as an alternative to traditional diagnostic systems. In a subsequent chapter on treatment methods, the space devoted to behaviorally based reductive procedures greatly overshadows the space given to reinforcement models for increasing rates of desirable or replacement behaviors. If the relative space accorded to these two topics may be used as an informal gauge of congruence with current behavioral treatment philosophy, this section does not represent current best practices.

As a textbook, the format of this volume is well designed. Each chapter is preceded by definitions of key terms, contains a preview of the contents, has boxes with examples that bring the text to life and make it more relevant to the reader, provides tables and figures that succinctly capture and reinforce major concepts, and concludes with a summary of the chapter's main points. The chapters are designed to stand alone, and could be utilized in a variety of sequences. For a graduate student readership, some chapters might be omitted. For example, the chapter on research methods provides an excellent review of experimental paradigms to prepare the novice reader as a consumer of research but would have little benefit for students who have already completed coursework in this area. As with the previous edi-

tion, there is a separate instructor's manual containing updated test questions and suggested films or videos.

Perhaps this book is at its best when it goes beyond the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (4th ed.) (American Psychiatric Association, 1994), which is not widely regarded for its relevance to childhood disorders, to delve into the larger social contexts that often give rise to childhood problems. The authors examine the macro-contingencies of disordered behavior such as homelessness, malnutrition, discrimination, cultural changes in family structure, child-rearing practices, and socioeconomic status. These components often become additive or interrelated, and inhibit access to education, health, and treatment delivery systems. The picture becomes very clear. One must be not only a well-grounded clinician but also a well-grounded advocate for social change in order to benefit high-risk children and families.

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